

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER JESSICA ROSENWORCEL**

Re: *Unlicensed Use of the 6 GHz Band, Expanding Flexible Use in Mid-Band Spectrum Between 3.7 GHz and 24 GHz*, ET Docket No. 17-183, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (April 23, 2020).

Not long after the invention of the personal computer, experts predicted that jobs would eventually be liberated from the office, and home would be the future of work. It didn't quite happen that way. But sometimes a powerful force can strike and change everything.

Consider ourselves struck. The coronavirus has ushered in remote work at unprecedented scale. Not everyone, to be sure. Doctors and nurses are still working at hospitals, first responders are out in our communities, and so many other essential workers are helping keep our pantries stocked and packages delivered. We salute them. Their efforts keep us healthy, keep us safe, and keep us connected.

But millions more of us are doing our part by staying at home. I know. I'm one of them. I also know there is a technology my household is relying on like never before. That's Wi-Fi. Because in this crisis, work, school, healthcare, and so much more have migrated online. Keeping connected is essential. If we're lucky we are using Wi-Fi to call, stream, and create at home as part of our broadband service. But remember that others are driving with devices to get online. In this pandemic, Parking-Lot Wi-Fi has become a thing as people get in their cars to go find a signal in communities where internet access at home is scarce. That needs attention because it is a stark reminder that when it comes to digital equity, we have work to do.

It also proves just how extensively we are relying on Wi-Fi right now. Then consider that even before we reached this juncture the unlicensed airwaves that Wi-Fi depends on have been growing crowded. Already the 2.4 and 5 GHz bands are used by billions of devices in the internet of things and that number is only poised to grow. Then consider that when we head to our 5G future we expect as much as 70 percent of traffic to be offloaded to unlicensed airwaves. And take note that with fiber, cable, and commercial wireless all moving to gigabit speeds, existing Wi-Fi risks being the bottleneck for faster speeds at home. Without making more and more wide channels available, our online experiences are going to feel a lot like getting off a superhighway onto a gravel road.

We need to act. Because we need more Wi-Fi. We need more unlicensed spectrum to carry all of the wireless activity that is coming our way. So when the Federal Communications Commission decided to explore the expansion of Wi-Fi in the 6 GHz band, I called for the agency to make available 1200 megahertz of new spectrum to support next-generation Wi-Fi, with 160 megahertz-wide channels that can offer gigabit speeds.

Today, we do just that. As a result, this effort has my support. I also appreciate that my colleagues have agreed to changes at my request, including clarifying power levels for client devices and seeking comment on opportunities for portable devices and the right power levels for very low power devices. In addition, I want to thank Commissioner O'Rielly for his early work

to champion these policies and his willingness to do so with my office. Finally, I want to recognize that with today's decision the agency makes progress on the need to identify additional bands for unlicensed use under the RAY BAUM'S Act.

So with this decision on unlicensed spectrum we do well by the law, we add more permissionless airwaves to the wireless economy, and we expand the democratizing force of having more Wi-Fi in more places. Amen. Those are good things to do in this crisis and for the days ahead.